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Attorneys for Defendants

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF UTAH**

AMERICAN FARM BUREAU)	Case No. 2:24-cv-665-RJS
FEDERATION, <i>et al.</i> ,)	Honorable Robert J. Shelby
)	
Plaintiffs,)	
)	
v.)	DEFENDANTS' STATEMENT
)	DENYING ARBITRARY AND
)	CAPRICIOUS ACTION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE)	
INTERIOR, <i>et al.</i> ,)	
)	
Defendants.)	
_____)	

Pursuant to Rule 7-4(b)(2)(B) of the District of Utah Local Rules of Civil Practice, Defendants U.S. Department of the Interior; U.S. Bureau of Land Management (“BLM”); Debra Haaland, in her official capacity as Secretary of the Interior; Stephen Feldgus, in his official capacity as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land and Minerals Management; and Tracy Stone-Manning, in her official capacity as the Director of BLM (collectively, “Defendants”) respectfully submit this response to Plaintiffs’ Complaint, ECF No.

1. In the Complaint, Plaintiffs challenge BLM’s issuance of the Conservation and Landscape Health Final Rule, 89 Fed. Reg. 40,308 (May 9, 2024) (also known as the “Public Lands Rule”). Plaintiffs allege that BLM’s issuance of the Public Lands Rule violated the National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”), Federal Land Policy and Management Act (“FLPMA”), Congressional Review Act (“CRA”), and Administrative Procedure Act (“APA”). *See* Compl. ¶¶ 171-82. Defendants deny that BLM’s issuance of the Public Lands Rule violated NEPA, FLPMA, the CRA, or the APA and deny that the Rule was otherwise was arbitrary, capricious, or contrary to law.

Defendants state the following affirmative defenses:

1. Lack of jurisdiction
2. Lack of standing
3. Lack of ripeness
4. Failure to state a claim.

Defendants deny that Plaintiffs have stated a valid claim for relief or that Plaintiffs are entitled to any relief whatsoever.

Respectfully submitted this 13th day of September 2024,

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